Navigating CANVaS

Guide to the Online
Virginia Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)
Assessment

for the

Comprehensive Services Act for at-Risk Youth and their Families
(CSA)

Navigating CANVaS

I. Introduction

This document "Navigating CANVaS" is intended to assist a CANVaS user in entering data and completing CANS assessments online as well as provide tips on how to avoid common errors. CANVaS may only be used for children and youth who are receiving services through the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA). CANS assessments for non-CSA purposes may not be entered into CANVaS.

To create your CANVaS account, see "Policies and Procedures for Accessing CANVaS"-Version 4 (October 2013).

Once you have created your CANVaS account, you may enter or complete CANS assessments on line.

Before you begin, print a copy of the CANS "Users' Manual" for whichever version of the CANS you will administer (Ages Birth to Four or Ages 5+) found on the CSA website at www.csa.virginia.gov (CANS folder/Documents) or on the home page of the CANVaS site. **This document provides the rating definitions for each item in the CANS assessment as well as the timeframe in which to rate each item.** You may also want to print the Virginia *Glossary of Items*, which provides more detail about the specific item meanings. (For example, "Physical Health" on the CANS does not refer to whether or not the child has been sick in the past few days; it refers to whether or not the child has a physical limitation which affects his/her everyday functioning.) Keep these documents as references as you are completing the CANS in CANVaS.

All children and youth receiving CSA-funded services must be administered the uniform assessment. The CANS Ages 5-17 (sometimes referred to as the Ages 5+) is appropriate for and must be used for youth ages 18-21 receiving CSA services.

II. How to Begin:

Log in using your user name and password.

You will see the following page.
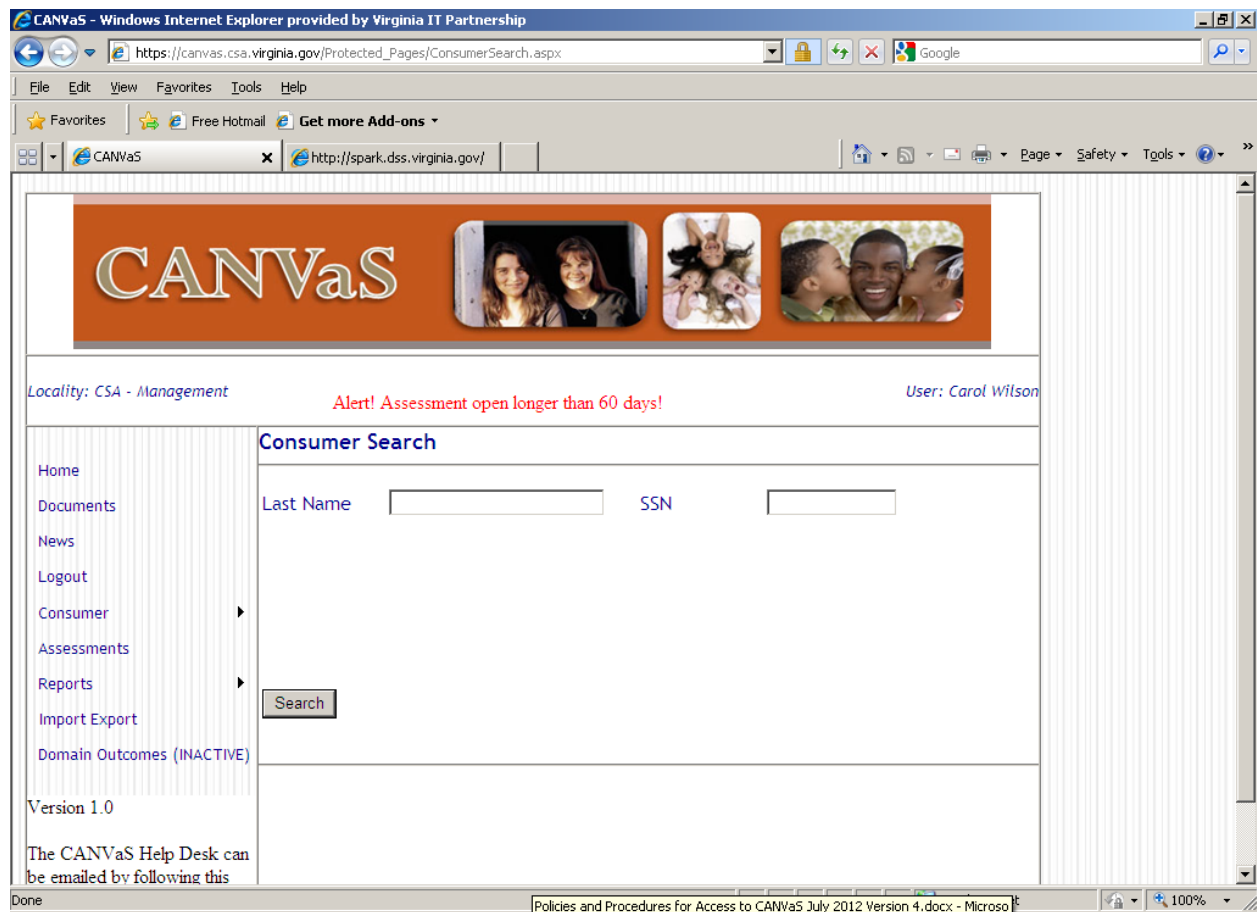
Note: CANVaS was adapted from another state's assessment software, and "consumer" was used as the term to refer to a child, youth or adult. For CANVaS purposes, "consumer" means the child or youth receiving services through the Comprehensive Services Act.

Enter the last name and social security number (or unique identifier*) of the child for whom you wish to complete an assessment. Click "search."

If **no** child is found with that last name and number, the screen will display as on the following page.

Your locality may use another unique identifier than the SSN for CSA purposes. Contact your CSA Coordinator if you are not sure. The same unique identifier used for CSA must be used in CANVaS.
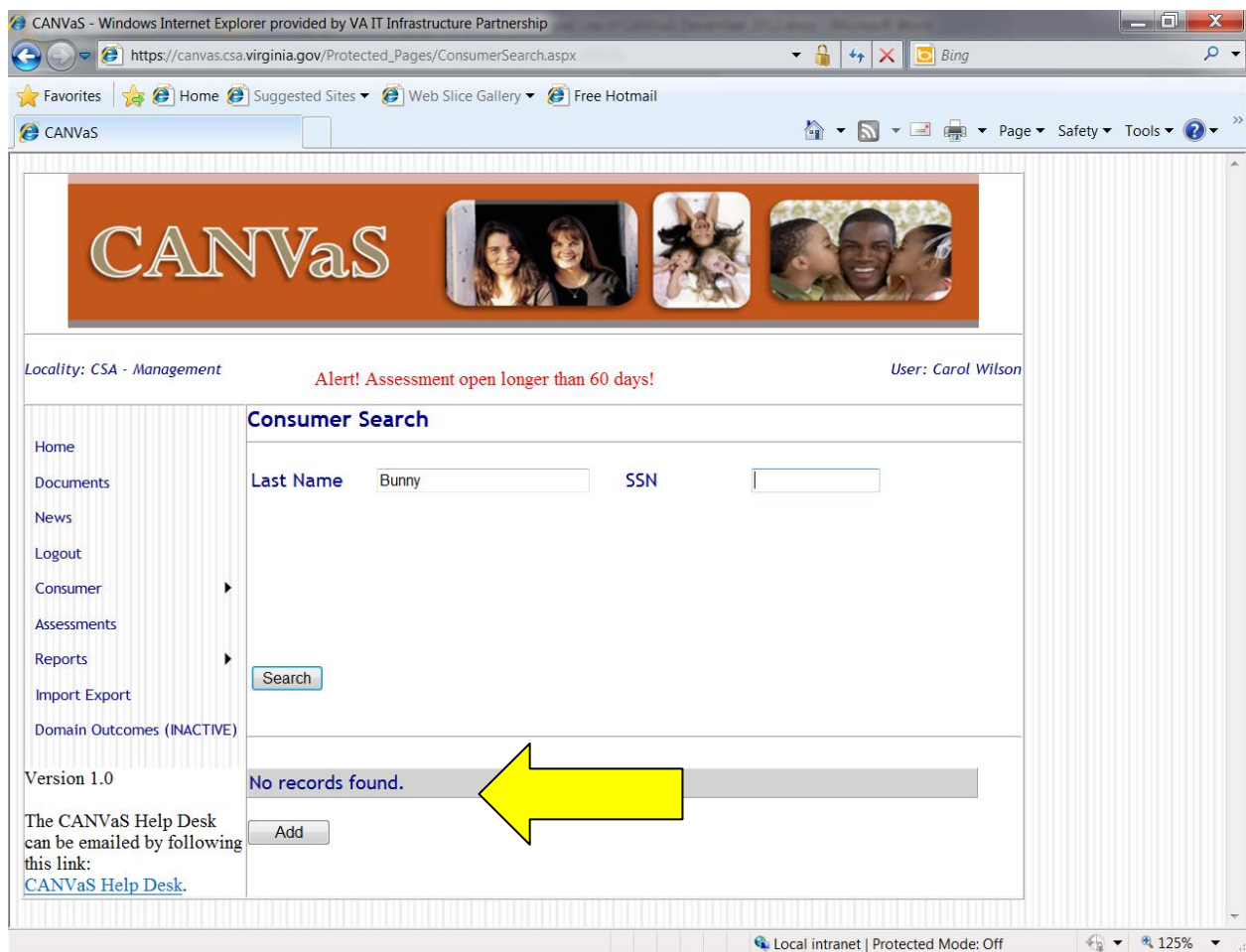
If you think the child already has assessments in CANVaS, check to make sure you are using the correct number. Contact the CANVaS Help Desk at 1-877-727-8329 to verify if this child is already in the system. It is very important to make sure the last name is spelled correctly and that the number provided is accurate. Again, your locality may use a different unique identifier than the SSN. If so, contact your CSA office and use the number assigned to this child or youth in CANVaS.

New Child in CANVaS
If the child is new to CANVaS, and the message "No records found" is displayed after doing the "Consumer Search", click the "Add" button to enter the child's information. (Note: You may edit or correct the child's information at any time by clicking on "Edit Consumer.")

The following page will display:

Add the child's information. If your locality uses a different unique identifier for the CSA data set than the SSN, use that number in CANVaS.

If the child's primary case manager is the local department of social services, add the child's OASIS number, not the client OASIS number. The child's OASIS number should contain seven (7) digits.

If the child's primary case manager is the court services unit, enter the JTS number assigned by the Department of Juvenile Justice.

If the child's primary case manager is the school, enter the child's Student Testing Identifier (STI).

For the planned permanent caregiver, you may enter the relationship of that individual to the child. It is not necessary to add the planned permanent caregiver's name. Simply repeat the relationship information in the next box for "Relation."

Remember only individuals, not agencies, can be planned permanent caregivers. A child may be in the custody of the local Department of Social Services, but if the plan is to return the child home to his parent(s), the parent(s) are the planned permanent caregivers. Or if the plan is to place the child with a relative(s), the relative(s) should be assessed as the planned permanent caregiver. The parent(s) or guardian(s) should be assessed even if the child is not currently in the home. Rate the parent(s) or guardian(s) based on how they would be able to care for the child if the child was in the home. For

example, if lack of housing was an issue that contributed to the child coming into foster care, has the parent(s) or guardian(s) obtained housing? You should rate the current situation of the parent(s) or guardian(s) at the time of the assessment. This information is useful in documenting whether or not a family may be ready to reunite.

Click "Insert" to add the child's information into CANVaS.

Click "Add Assessment" on the next screen.

Child already entered into CANVaS
OR, if a child already has assessments in CANVaS, a screen will display as below.

To create a new assessment for this child, click on "Add Assessment."

III. Creating the Assessment:

After you click on "Add Assessment," for either a newly-entered child or a child who was already active in CANVaS, the following screen will appear:

Select "Interview Mode" or "Rapid Entry Mode" if you are a case manager. "Interview Mode" provides a brief rating description as you move through each item. "Rapid Entry Mode" only provides the name of the item within each domain and the rating numbers. "Rapid Entry Mode" should not be used unless you are very experienced in administering the CANS and familiar with the item rating definitions and the timeframe for each item. If you are using "Rapid Entry Mode", you can switch to "Interview Mode" to see a rating definition. However, the [CANS Users' Guide](#) provides more information and specific time frames for items.

Enter the date the assessment is being completed.

Click on the drop-down box to access your name as the assessor.

CANS Comprehensive assessments should be completed at a minimum initially, annually and at discharge. For the first and subsequently annual assessments, click "Initial." The Comprehensive version of the CANS will populate in the field "Select Assessment Tool." This means you will be completing the full version of the CANS, including any modules your responses on certain items may trigger. For example, if you rate the child a "1" or higher on the Developmental item, you will be prompted to complete the Developmental module before you close the assessment. It is NOT necessary to complete modules other than the ones that are triggered. The system will prompt you as to which modules must be done before closing the assessment.

Reassessments

<mark>Important note re: Reassessments:</mark> If you are completing a "Reassessment" (at ninety days, six months, or whatever schedule your locality follows) click the "Reassessment" bubble but <mark>also</mark> click on the drop down box on "Select Assessment Tool." Select the Reassessment version of the CANS. The Reassessment version of the CANS does <u>not</u> include the child functioning modules. **If you do not select the Reassessment version from the drop-down box, you will default to the Comprehensive version and will need to complete any triggered modules. You will not be able to close the assessment unless you complete any triggered modules.**

Reminder: If you are completing a "Reassessment", be sure to select "Reassessment" from the drop-down box as indicated by the second arrow above.

Discharge CANS

When a child or youth is exiting services that are funded by CSA, complete a discharge CANS by clicking on the "Transition/Discharge" bubble on the "Add Assessment" page.

IV. Completing the Assessment (Comprehensive or Reassessment)

General Questions Section:

The first page of the assessment, entitled "General Questions" must be completed. These questions may be viewed if you click on "Interview Mode" at the bottom of the screen (you can switch back to "Rapid Entry Mode.") The questions and rating definitions are:

1. **Has the child received intensive community-based services in the past six months, and if so, were those services successful? ****
   - o "0" Child has not received community-based services.
   - o "1" Child has received community-based services and the services were successful.
   - o "2" Child has received community-based services and the services were not successful.

2. **Has the decision been made by DSS (Department of Social Services) or the J&DR (Juvenile and Domestic Relations) court to currently remove the child from home?**
   - o "0" No, a decision has not been made.
   - o "1" Yes, a decision has been made.

3. **Child's Age**
   - o "0" The child is ages 5-13.
   - o "1" The child is ages 14-17.
   - o "2" The child is age 18 or older.

4. **Child's Placement (Rate "0" for NO and "1" for YES.) Rate the child's <u>primary</u> placement with a "1." Rate the remaining with a "0."**

   Foster Home: Is the child currently placed in a foster home?
   - o "0" No, the child spends no time in a foster home.
   - o "1" Yes, the child spends at least some time in a foster home.

   Group Home: Is the child currently placed in a group home?
   - o "0" No, the child spends no time in a group home.
   - o "1" Yes, the child spends at least some time in a group home.

   Residential Treatment Center: Is the child currently placed in a residential treatment center?
   - o "0" No, the child spends no time in a residential treatment center.
   - o "1" Yes, the child spends at least some time in a residential treatment center.

   Family/Relation Home: Is the child currently placed with family or relative?
   - o "0" No, the child spends no time in a family or relative's home.
   - o "1" Yes, the child spends at least some time in a family or relative's home.

**If the child has been in placement for an extended period of time, rate the time frame prior to placement.

V. Rating the CANS:

Rate each item. It is easy to miss or skip a "bubble." When you complete the assessment, you will close the assessment. If you have missed an item or items, the system will prompt you to complete those items.

Remember items are rated not only on the level of severity of need, but whether or not action should be taken in this area. Action levels "trump" severity levels. For example, if a rater is debating between rating an item a "1" or a "2", the rater should consider if there is a need for intervention in this area. If action is required (for example, continued placement in a residential program) the item should be rated a "2".

There are six "Key Principles" to rating the CANS which are discussed in the online training (found at www.CANSTraining.com)   These Principles create a structure which informs how items are rated on the CANS. Two common rating errors result from misunderstanding of two of these principles; the use of the thirty-day window and rating the child "in services" not the child. The thirty-day window does not apply to all items. Also, a need for action on an item will override the thirty-day window. For more information on the Six Key Principles, the thirty-day window and rating the child, not the child "in services" see Guidance on Rating the Virginia CANS and Guidance on the CANS 30 Day Time Frame on the state CSA website in the CANS folder (www.csa.virginia.gov)

Tips on rating to avoid common errors:

Life Functioning: Always rate the Independent Living item. If the child is under the age of 14, rate the item a "0." If the child is age 14 or older, rate the youth's functioning in this area.

Child Strengths: Remember, the lower the rating on strengths and needs, the better the child is functioning. Lower scores always reflect improvement. A "0" on a strength means this is a centerpiece strength for the child; a "0" on a need means there is no need in that area. Both are positive indicators. Likewise a "3" on a strength means there is no strength in this area; a "3" on a need means there is a significant need in this area which must be addressed immediately. Both are negative indicators.

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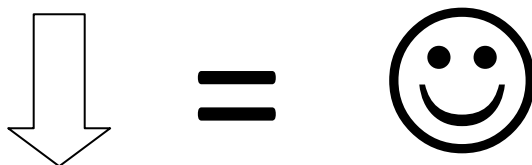
School: If the child is still enrolled in school, even if school is not currently in session (for example, in the summer) rate the child's attendance, behavior and achievement as of his/her last school placement. If the child was expelled, rate all three items as "3s".

Special Note for Local DSS staff on Rating the Planned Permanent Caregiver (PPC): As noted earlier, this domain should be rated on the parents or intended caregivers even if the child is out of the home. If the plan is return home, the parents or caregivers continue to be rated throughout this time. Rating the PPC provides documentation which may support or oppose the child's return home. For example, if a parent continues to have severe substance use issues which interfere with his/her ability to parent, or is unable to locate stable housing, these items would be rated a "2" or "3" on the CANS and reflect that a child's return home is not appropriate at the time. Foster parents are not rated here unless the child/youth is in a permanent foster care placement or the foster parent plans to adopt this child.

Only use N/A in this domain for children whose parents' rights have been terminated and no adoptive family located, or for youth whose goal is Independent Living. Do not use N/A in this domain for children in the custody of LDSS for whom the goal is to reunite.

The "safety" item in this domain refers to the need for child protective services if there has been abuse/neglect in the home. If a child is in foster care, the item is rated similar to the other items in this domain-if the child was to return home at the time of assessment, would there be a safety issue? If so, a rating of "2" or "3" supports the decision for the child to remain in foster care.

Child Risk Behaviors

The "Social Behavior" item could be entitled "Intentional Misbehavior" as it refers to behavior that is intended to provoke an adult response and may have no relationship to the actual problem the child is experiencing. The behavior is simply to get the adult to pay attention.

VI. Closing Assessments

When the assessment is complete, click the "Close Assessment" and Process/Save" buttons. The assessment should close and revert back to the "View Consumer" page. If the assessment does not close, the system will prompt you as to what items you have missed that must be completed. In the "General Questions" section for the response to "Current Placement" you must mark "1" for the child's placement and select "0" for the other three choices.

The system will identify any items you have missed and prompt you to respond as on the next page.

If you have missed items, or not completed required modules, be sure to complete each item. Do not leave the assessment open. <u>Once you have created an assessment in CANVaS, you must close the assessment within sixty days.</u> Ratings on assessments may be changed as long as the assessment is open. While there are legitimate reasons for changing an item rating (for example, the FAPT or supervisor disagree with rater's assessment as the rater is inexperienced or biased, or new information has come to light) these changes should be made as soon as identified and no later than sixty days after the assessment is created in CANVaS. Closed assessments may be retrieved and printed at any time after closure, but may not be altered. Closing an assessment does not mean you are closing the child's case in CANVaS.

Open assessments are not considered valid and cannot be used for data evaluation, outcomes measurement or audit documentation. Assessments which remain open in CANVaS after sixty days may be deleted from the system. As noted in the screen shots, if an assessment remains open after sixty days, an alert in red font is displayed across the top of the screen when that case manager is using CANVaS. (Alert! Assessment open longer than sixty days!)

VII. Algorithm Recommendation:

CANVaS is programmed to generate either "No Recommendation" or "Recommendation" for "Residential or Intensive Community-Based Services in a Therapeutic Environment" based on ratings of certain items or combination of items on the CANS. The algorithm identifies children or youth who meet a threshold of mental health needs which may be best met either with residential treatment, or, if the resources are available and the need can be met in the community with intensive services in a therapeutic environment such as a treatment foster home. If "Recommendation" is displayed, the system is reporting that the child's assessment reflects this level of need. If "No Recommendation" is reported, it simply means the child's assessment does not reflect the threshold of mental health needs.

Family Assessment and Planning Teams should view the recommendation or lack of a recommendation as simply one piece of information in decision-making. Many variables contribute to the accuracy of the recommendation, including assessor error in rating, under-rating of needs, lack of understanding of the assessment time frames, rating the child "in services" as opposed to simply rating the child's needs, etc. The algorithm measures only the level of severity of emotional/behavioral needs and does not consider the provision of services for other child and family needs. More information on the algorithm and common rating errors may be found at http://www.csa.virginia.gov/html/cans/canvas.cfmin in particular, the document dated July 1, 2011. Because of these concerns, the algorithm remains as a "pilot." A screen shot showing "No Recommendation" is below.

VIII. Log-in Update (Changing your Password)

Beginning in October 2013, users will need to change their CANVaS password at least every ninety days. Initially, users will be prompted on a random basis to change their password. On an ongoing basis, users will be prompted at log-in beginning on the 81st day to change their password. The user may click "Reset Password" to start the process or click "OK" to wait to reset the password. If however, the password is not reset by the 90th day, the user will receive notification that his or her password is expired when the user attempts to log in to the site. Access to the site is denied until the user contacts the CANVaS Help Desk at 1-877-727-8329 and creates a new log-in.

If at any other time, a user wishes to reset a password, enter your user name on the log-in page, and click on the "Forgot Password?" link.

To reset a password either when prompted, or simply if the user wishes to change the password, follow the process outlined below.

Enter your user name.
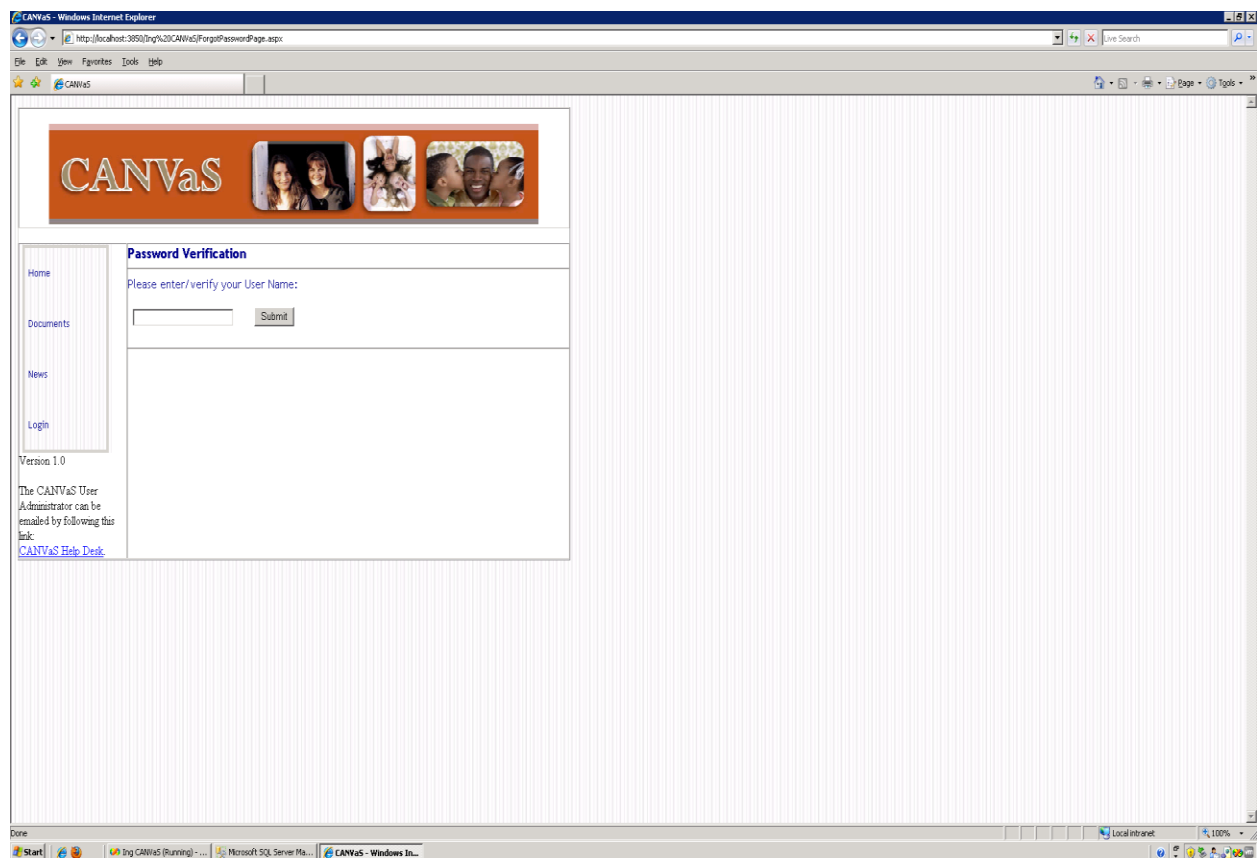
You will be prompted to answer your "secret question" that was selected at the time you created your account. Click "Submit."

If you do not answer your question correctly, you will receive the following message. "Your response was incorrect. Please try again or contact the CANVaS Help Desk at (877) 727-8329 or canvashelpdesk@rcrtechnology.com"

If you answer the question correctly, you will be prompted to select a new password as indicated below. Re-enter the password. Click "Reset Password."
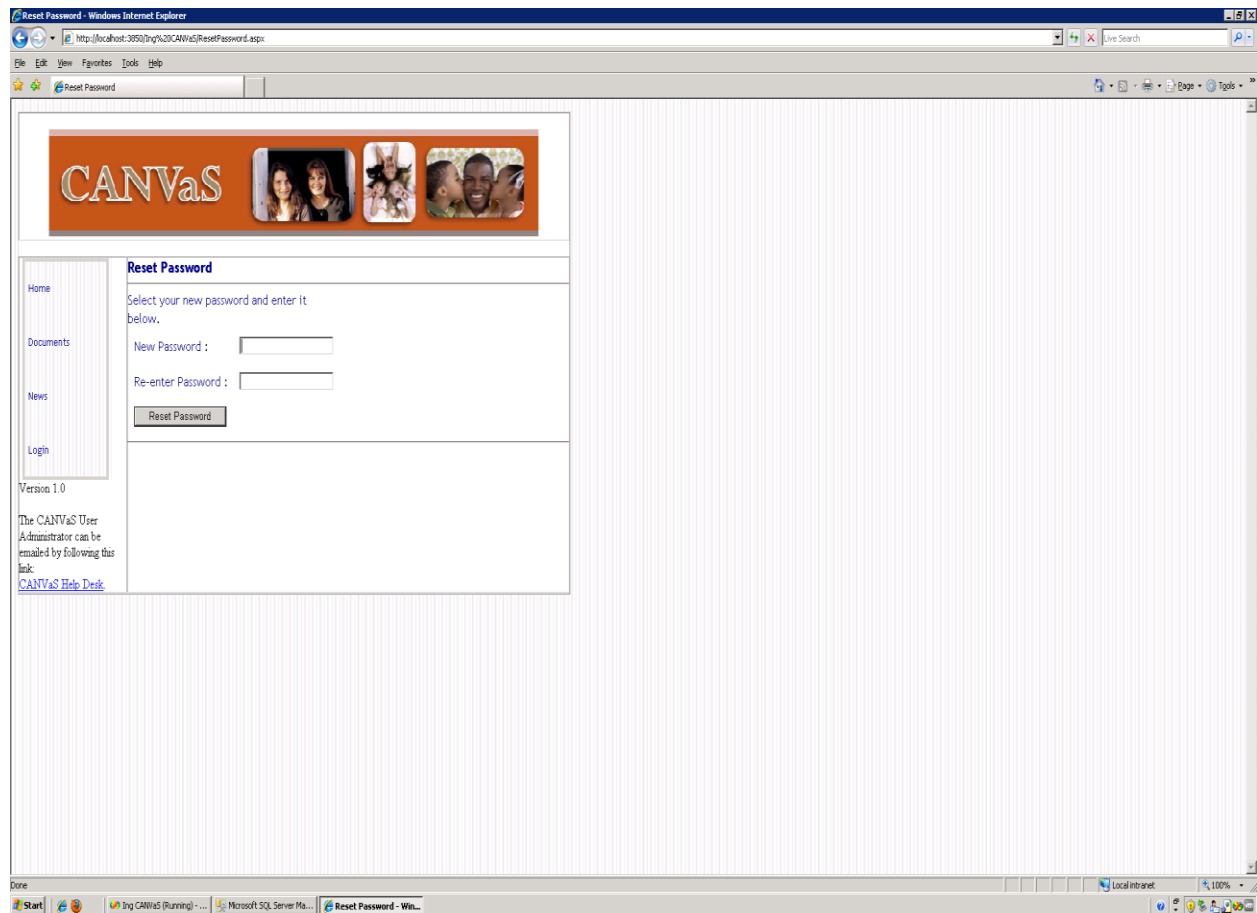

To re-set a password, you must use a word that:
- is not based on a single dictionary word,
- is 8-10 characters in length; and includes
  - an upper case letter(s)
  - a lower case letter(s)
  - a number(s); and
  - a special character(s).
- Do not use empty or "white" spaces.

If you successfully reset your password, the following will display:
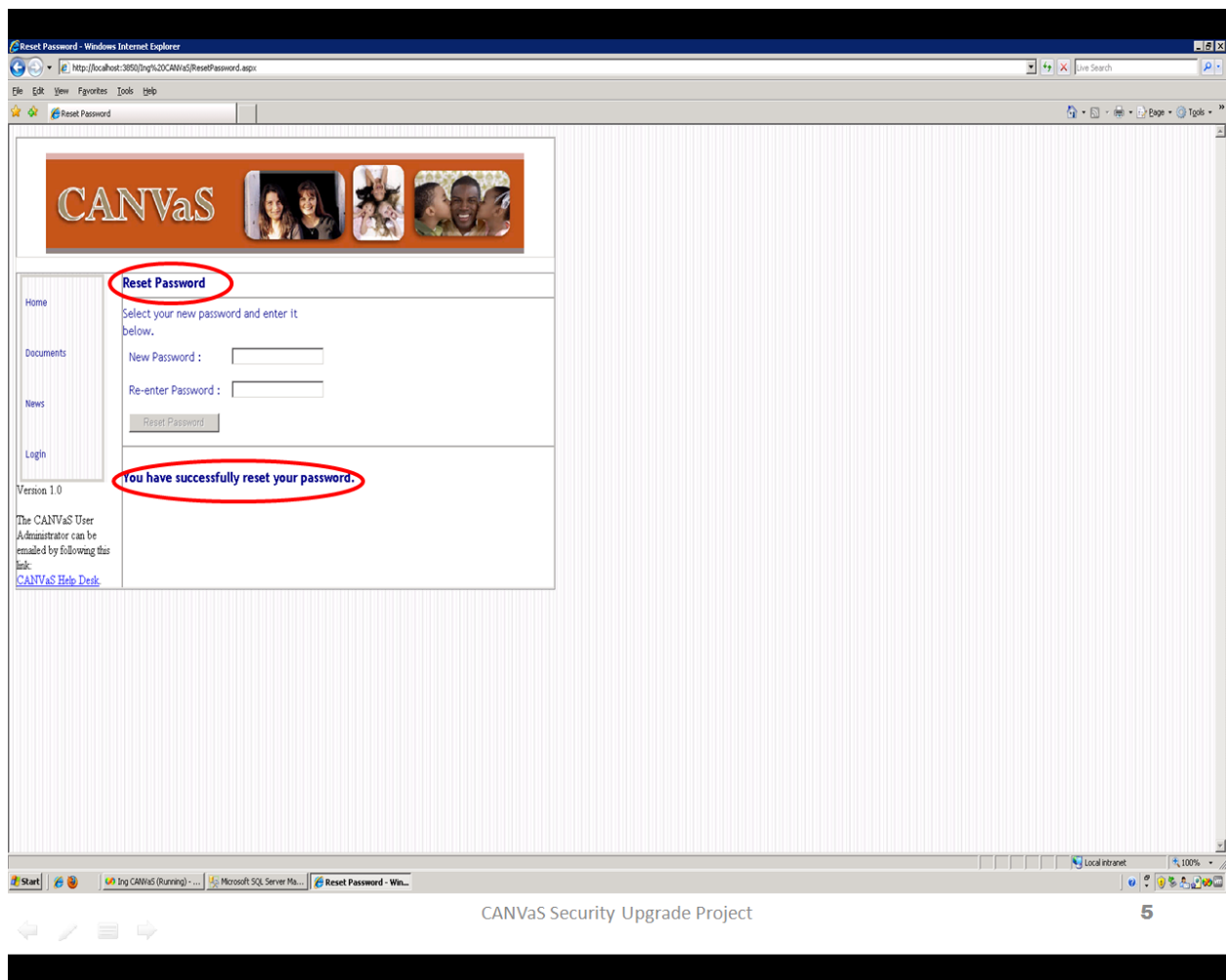
If you do not use the necessary number or type of characters, letters and numbers in your password, you will receive the following message.
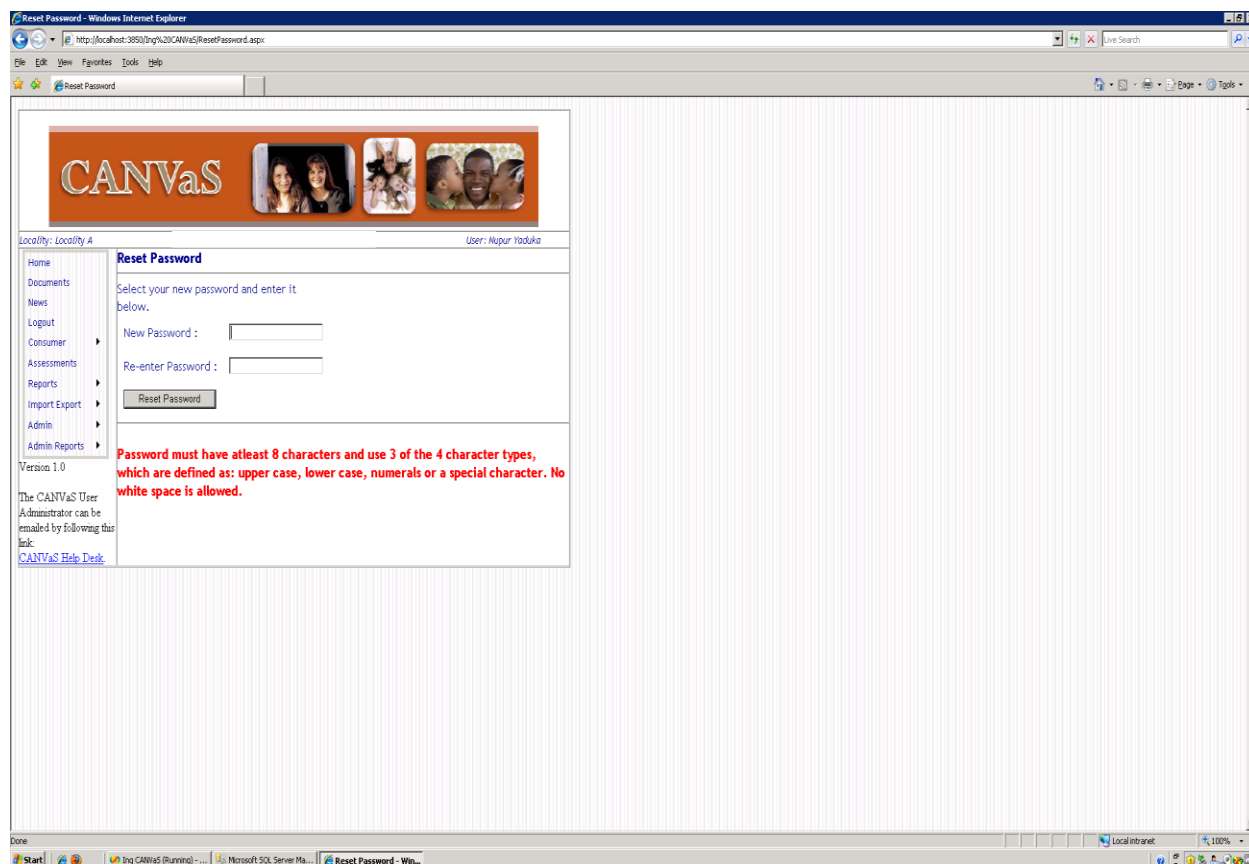
You may not use a previous password. You will be prompted to try again.

Passwords may be re-set only once in a 24 hour period. If you need to re-set your password immediately, contact the CANVaS Help Desk at 1-877-727-8329.

IX. Contact Information

If you have questions about navigating or use of CANVaS, contact the CANVaS Help Desk at 1-877-727-8329 or canvashelpdesk@rcrtechnology.com The Help Desk is staffed from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, exclusive of holidays.   The Help Desk fax number is 1-317-631-3345.

The CANVaS Help Desk staff are not able to respond to, or assist with, inquiries regarding the CANS Training and Certification site (www.CANSTraining.com) You must contact the Praed Foundation's online support for assistance with that site.

You may also contact the Office of Comprehensive Services at (804) 662-9815 if you have CANS or CANVaS questions.